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Maleiha Malik (ed.), *Anti-Muslim Prejudice: Past and Present*, Abingdon: Routledge, 2010, viii + 222 pp., ISBN 978-0-415-54987-5, n.p.

It is not clear whether this volume is the product of a seminar or conference, or rather a specially compiled collection of papers, but either way it represents a significant contribution to the study of anti-Muslim prejudice, which overlaps with but is nevertheless significantly different from Islamophobia. It does so through ten chapters, some more historical and some more contemporary, and some more social scientific and some more humanities-oriented, focusing on a number of geographical contexts. Two chapters are jointly-authored. There are also five very telling illustrations from recent European political campaigns, from Denmark (p. 114), Switzerland and Germany (p. 117), Austria (p. 119), and the United Kingdom (p. 161), and Chapter 9 contains 14 graphs.

The first chapter, by Nabil Matar, surveys British attitudes towards Muslims, from roughly 1500 to 1750 CE, a period in which many of those who had had no personal encounter with Muslims preserved some of the older medieval negative portrayals of Islam, while some of those who did have some first-hand experience of encounter, primarily diplomats and merchants, formulated a

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sometimes rather more positive image. There is an interesting reminder that late eighteenth century astrologers in Britain confidently predicted the destruction of Islam and the conversion of all Muslims to Christianity in the year 1701 (p. 19). The second chapter moves to South-Eastern Europe to investigate anti-Muslim prejudice among the Slavs and some of its consequences, both in the latter years of the Ottoman Empire and in the past two decades. The transition from anti-*Turkish* to anti-*Muslim* prejudice is tellingly chronicled by Slobodan Drakulic. Chapters 3 and 4 are more theoretical, Gil Andijar outlining the whole concept of the metaphorical wall as it has developed in Western European history with reference to Jews and others as well as Muslims; and Sonya Fernandez then discussing 'the crusade over the bodies of women', suggesting that a false dichotomy has been established between a West that is aspiring to gender equality and an Islam which persists in practising traditions of patriarchy and gender inequality. Western attitudes towards such questions as the veil, 'honour killings', and forced marriages are, she suggests, a kind of continuation of the Crusades by other means, which needs to be challenged by means of the subjection of *all* religions, societies and cultures to an equal critique.

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The remaining six chapters move to some more detailed contemporary case studies. Chapter 5, by Leora Bilsky, is a fascinating comparative case study of French attitudes towards the *hijab*, as seen in legislation to ban its being worn in public places, and an incident from Israel when a Palestinian Israeli, Professor Nizar Hassan, asked a student of his who came to a class wearing his Israeli army uniform, not to do so. Dress has different levels of meaning and significance everywhere. In Chapter 6 Hans-Georg Betz and Susi Meret investigate right-wing mobilisation against Islam in different continental European contexts, under the title 'Revisiting Lepanto', and including some of the interesting examples of campaign posters referred to above. Chapter 7, by Nasar Meer and Tariq Modood, includes the British context as well as the wider European one in discussing the relationship between racism and anti-Muslim prejudice, suggesting that a significant part of the problem is a general western suspicion of religion *per se*, what Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury calls the tendency whereby secularism becomes the intellectual default position for many people in the West. The British newspapers in particular are then subjected to a rigorous examination by John E Richardson in Chapter 8, under the title "'Get shot of the lot of them": election reporting of Muslims in British newspapers'. The results are not encouraging, particularly as seen in some of the comments in the

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Forum section of *The Daily Star* following a front-page article in April 2005 entitled 'Muslim loonies hijack election'. Chapter 9 is then another comparative study, by Erik Bleich, this time of where Muslims stand in the ethno-racial hierarchies of Britain and France, as seen in public opinion surveys between 1988 and 2008. The suggestion is that as *ethnic* groups, Muslims are not faring too badly, but that as a *religious* group, 'Muslims have become the primary religious outsiders by a wide margin in both countries' (p. 181). Black people and asylum-seekers in particular appear lower in the ethnic hierarchy than Muslims in some British reports, but the author's conclusion is that if Muslims are slipping fast this is a serious cause for concern, leading to the suggestion that the term 'Islamophobia' should indeed be deployed in both countries. The Rushdie affair in Britain, and headscarf debate in France, both of which began in 1989, have clearly have had a legacy.

Chapter 10 then moves to the United States and a consideration by Erik Love of how to confront what he definitely calls Islamophobia in the American context. The relationship between traditional racism and anti-Muslim prejudice is discussed, with a particular focus on the racial categories widely used in the United States, whereby Middle Eastern Muslims are categorised as 'white', Afro-American Muslims as 'black', and South Asian Muslims as 'Asian'. Given this

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diversity within Muslim communities in the United States, Islam is almost the only factor which is held in common. Attitudes towards Muslims in popular culture are examined, together with Islamophobia in government policy, and the final eight pages of the paper focus on various programmes to confront Islamophobia in the American context.

Put together, the chapters certainly illustrate the extent of the difficulties which Muslims face in many Western contexts, on both sides of the Atlantic. One aspect of anti-Muslim prejudice which is not really discussed at all is the way in which the phenomenon has now spread to many non-Western contexts, particularly in Africa, as a result of its diffusion through the networks of some evangelical Christian organisations. No single volume can do everything, however, and the book certainly makes very clear the historical longevity of anti-Muslim prejudice, as well its different manifestations today. At certain points the reader might therefore feel rather overwhelmed by feelings of hopelessness, but if this is the case an antidote is provided by the final pages of the book, which might helpfully serve as a call to (metaphorical) arms.

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